

THE  
**COMMON SCHOOL JOURNAL.**  
NEW SERIES.

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**VOL. XIII.      BOSTON, DECEMBER 1, 1851.      NO. 23.**

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**THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF BOSTON.**

THE REPORT OF THE ANNUAL EXAMINATION OF THE PUBLIC  
SCHOOLS OF THE CITY OF BOSTON, 1851.

[Concluded from last number.]

After some judicious remarks on the importance of thorough education in the rudiments, before the pupils are advanced to the higher studies, the Report says, —

“ There is a great difference between the schools in respect to the *moral influence* exerted over them by the teachers. That which makes preëminently a good teacher of youth, is a power of moral influence over them, which commands their affection and esteem, controls their wills ; inspires them with a noble ambition to excel in their studies, and forms in them the lofty and effective determination to grow in all the higher qualities of character. There is something beautiful, even sublime, in the power thus wielded by the teacher. It is not inferior, either in kind or degree, to that exerted by a good Christian pastor over a devoted people. This quality in a teacher is deserving of far more consideration than it has usually received. That there is now a great improvement over former years, in this particular, no one can question, who has spent only a few moments, either in the schools, or in their halls and exterior apartments. The entire absence of everything obscene or offensive, of every mark or defacement, upon all parts of the building, within and without, and the air of purity and neatness pervading the entire premises, conspire, with the general appearance of the pupils in session, to im-

press us with the belief, that, *however children may conduct at home, they certainly do behave better at school than they once did.\** The Committee are gratified to find, that, whilst our best masters, *not essaying a wisdom superior to Solomon's*, have none of that morbid sensibility, which refuses to use the rod *when it is necessary*, they have yet the higher power of influence over their pupils, which renders the necessity for it a rare occurrence."

Here is a text for a dozen essays. We are glad to perceive, what has not always appeared in the Reports of Committees, a distinct recognition of the fact, that Character is more essential than the smattering of Grammar, Arithmetic, and similar branches, that our children acquire at school. Here is a distinct declaration, that, notwithstanding the deterioration of the materials of our schools by the infusion of foreign and neglected children, the external proofs of internal purity are more distinct than at any former period. We well remember the day when the schoolhouses and outhouses were defaced and disgustingly loathsome, and the pupils appeared to suppose that every thing appertaining to a schoolhouse should be so. The same evil exists to a great degree all over New England, and in a valuable town Report, now before us, the Committee remark, with apparent pride, that "ten of the fifteen schoolhouses in the township are provided with the necessary appurtenance of a privy, two having been erected within the year." If the other five districts are not indictable at common law for their neglect of decency in this particular, some *uncommon* law should instantly be enacted to meet the case. We ask no better test of the civilization of a district, a hotel, or a private house, than the condition of this appendage to them. The Report does not allude, we believe, to the improved ventilation of the schoolrooms, but we believe the plan of Emerson or Dr. Clark, or both, adopted a year or two ago, has produced the most beneficial results, and has caused a saving of more than the whole cost of the noble buildings, by the

\* A mother once inquired of us how her daughter behaved at school. We replied that she was quite attentive, industrious, and obedient. "She is not so at home," said she. "Is that my fault?" I inquired. "I do not know about that," said the mother, "but I think of changing her school." The child was removed soon afterward. The Reporter has probably had similar experience. — ED.

saving of health arising from a supply of pure air. The allusion to corporal punishment is somewhat amusing. If we understand it, any reluctance to use the rod, that is, any refusal to inflict bodily pain upon the child, is an assumption of wisdom superior to Solomon's, and must arise from morbid or sickly sensibility. This is of a piece with a notion published in the Boston Puritan or Recorder, a few years ago, which was, that, as the use of the rod was salutary, and commended by Solomon, it should be tried, whether the child offended or not. We did not expect such a pitiful slur from the writer of the Report; for, if we are not to improve upon the wisdom of Solomon, we ought long ago to have applied the brakes to the wheels of civilization. Solomon never dreamed of a school, much less of a public free school, and still less of such a magnificent free school system, and such educational palaces, as are the glory of Boston. Moses and Solomon approved of circumcision; does the Reverend Reporter "*essay* a wisdom superior to that of both Moses and Solomon?" It is time that such cant was dismissed from School Reports; for, if we are not to advance beyond the wisdom and learning of Solomon; if his knowledge of any subject is to be the *ne plus ultra* of human advancement, God help the gentleman Reporter, who is, probably, as much superior to Solomon in every branch of knowledge that Solomon ever studied, as the monarch was superior to his ignorant countrymen; and all he knows and teaches of sciences that Solomon never heard of, must be counted as sins to be repented of, and *essayed* no longer. We are thankful that some, at least, of the excellent teachers of Boston have found out the better way, and we trust they will not be sneered out of it. We once attended a School Convention, in a dark corner of our State, where the wisdom and example of Solomon were held up in a similar manner for the guidance of Committees and Teachers, and a County Superintendent of New York State remarked, that, "if we went for the rod, on such authority, we ought to go for the seven hundred or more wives also, example being more important than any precept."

The following remark is highly important, and cannot be too deeply pondered by parents. The Report says, —

“Nor should it be here forgotten that parents also have a great responsibility. They ought to sympathise cordially with the teachers; to speak kindly and respectfully of them in their families; to inspire in their children sentiments of love and esteem for them; to consider the arduousness of their task, and do all in their power to relieve it. To do otherwise is suicidal. Those parents who take the part of their children against a faithful teacher, may soon find the children taking a fearful part against their parents.”

The teacher, the district school teacher especially, has never been seconded or respected by the parents. It is true that the teacher has not always been worthy of respect. In general intelligence and manners he has too often fallen below the standard of the best society, and, of course, has been neglected, if not despised. A better day is coming, but it will come slowly, until the thousands, who assume the office of teacher merely as a stepping-stone to something more profitable, make up their minds, that nothing is more honorable, and, probably, nothing will be more profitable, if they devote themselves body and soul to the work.

The Report has much to say on the subject of inconstant attendance, and we give the remarks in full, because the Reporter proposes a remedy somewhat peculiar: —

“The Committee have observed, that the best teachers usually succeed in securing the most uniform *attendance* of the pupils.\* In some instances it has been remarkably good; in others, however, the most faithful teachers have failed to realize the attendance which they have a right to expect. The old saying, that ‘What costs nothing is not prized,’ has here its illustration. Some parents place so little value upon the Schools, as to allow every trifling cause to withhold from them their children. Now, it is ascertained that the annual cost of public school instruction in Boston averages at least fifteen dollars a scholar. This does not include a vast amount of labor bestowed by persons whose time is of more value than money. If all the expenses and ser-

\* When will the Committees and the Legislature learn, that no Rules, no Laws, nothing but the “best teachers” will ever secure the constant and cheerful attendance of pupils?



vices rendered were fully estimated, they would amount for each pupil to nearer twenty than fifteen dollars *per annum*. If parents had actually to pay this sum annually from their earnings, for the instruction of each of their children, they would doubtless prize it more highly than they now do. But this is the least part of the cost. Pupils, who are absent a portion of the time, retard the progress of their entire class, and, eventually, of the whole school to which they belong. They occasion vexation, derangement, delay. They thus not only waste the public treasure bestowed upon themselves, but that bestowed upon others. They also do injustice to the reputation of their teachers. When we consider the incalculable evils resulting every way from inconstant attendance, we are constrained to be earnest upon this subject. Some parents leave the city during the summer term, but, in most instances, they might still avoid taking their children away, or might send them daily into town by the numerous and easy conveyances; and, if not, they had better themselves remain in the city till the academic season terminates, than subject the school to such evils as the absence of their children occasions. Others withhold their children from school a portion of the time for the sake of their services. But what is the value of these services compared with the loss? It is doubtful whether many of them earn as much as the City is in the mean time paying for their instruction. Parents should realize that the time of their children, while they are obtaining an education, is too valuable to be withdrawn to other pursuits. Others are kept from school merely because they do not wish to attend. A child's whim, and a parent's pusillanimity, will probably account for one-half (of) all the delinquencies.

"It becomes, then, a grave question whether the School Committee ought not to take stringent measures to secure the uniform attendance of the pupils. That something more should be done for this purpose than has been done, seems quite certain.\* It is due to the City, to the Schools, to the Teachers, to those Children who are disposed to improve their advantages, and, not least, to those who are not thus disposed. It is, therefore, proposed that all who would enter the schools, be received only on the pledged condition, that they continue uniformly and punctually to attend through the academic year. Such is the regulation insisted upon in our best private schools; and, as a motive to enforce it, as the only means of securing thorough and finished

\* The Report does not allude to the late law, authorizing the towns to compel truants and others to attend school, and, of course, does not inform us what has thus far been the result of the experiment. Boston was among the first to accept the law and appoint the proper persons to see it executed.

scholarship, parents are held responsible for the pay, whether their children continue to attend or not.\* The measure is generally effectual to the end. And why should not the regulations of the public schools be equally strict and exacting? Is not the public treasure as sacred as the private? And is not the education of those children for whom the city provides as important as the education of those for whom their parents provide? Excuses for absence, founded on ill-health or other urgent contingencies, would, of course, receive due consideration. All excuses not satisfactory to the masters, might be referred through the Superintendent to the Sub-Committees. The penalty of absence beyond a reasonable limit, or for causes not satisfactory to the Masters or Committees, should be a forfeiture of a place in the schools.† All incorrigibly bad conduct should be subject to a similar penalty. Let the principle be universally recognized and sustained, that these schools, established to guide and educate our children; to guard them from every vice; to form them to habits of industry and strict virtue; to prepare them to act well their parts in life, will countenance nothing subversive of these high ends; then only will the best wishes of their friends and patrons be realized. The million of dollars expended at each lustrum upon them, will be returned with large interest, in the more valuable riches of mind and character."

It is a pity that Solomon did not say something about truants, that the Reporter might have had a guide. When we were at school, the rod was the only specific for absence and unpunctuality, and, much as we despise the fear of bodily pain as a motive, we believe this would be more effectual than the plan proposed by the Reporter. Children will not go voluntarily to school, unless they are more happy there than elsewhere. A pledge to send his children all the year, would not be given by any one able to pay a penalty, and those unable to pay might as well not give the pledge.

It must be recollected that this Report relates only to the Grammar Schools, 27 in number, in which were 4634 boys between the ages of 7 and 14, and 4694 girls between the ages of 7 and 16, — Total, 9328; the average attendance being 8110½.

\* The regulation may be the same, but the penalty will be wanting.

† Not of the *pay*, as in the case of private schools. Thus those children would be driven from school, whom it is the object of the legislature to compel to go to school.

This estimate was made in July, when the attendance is less than at any other time. The Report bears marks of having been written in great haste, and although printed and distributed by order of the School Committee, the order is accompanied with the nullifying Resolve, "that, in accepting the Annual Report of the Committee, on the state of the Schools, the Board is not to be understood as expressing any opinion relative to the expediency of any alterations in the School System which are recommended in the said Report." We have treated the Report, therefore, rather as an individual affair, than one of the Board, and we are induced to ask when the citizens may expect a Report in which the Board shall express their own opinion. Such dodging is very much like that of the Board of Education in the days of their first Secretary. The great question of questions is not alluded to in the Report, viz., How are we to prevent the children of foreigners from subverting our free schools? The question has begun to command attention in Cambridge; it cannot much longer be avoided in Boston.

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Experience is more useful as a warning than as an example. He who follows the past, will wander in the present and be lost in the future. "The enemy's army is commanded by very experienced generals," said a veteran to the young Napoleon. "So much the better," said he, "for my new tactics will the more perplex them."

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How can a man expect that others will be candid with him, when he knows that, under similar circumstances, he should not be candid with others.

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It depends very much on the speaker and the occasion, whether general observations are received as great truths or as stale truisms.

## TRUST TO THE FUTURE.

BY CAROLINE A. BRIGGS.

Trust to the Future ; — tho' gloomy and cheerless,  
Prowls the dark Past like a ghost at thy back ;  
Look not behind thee ; — be hopeful and fearless ;  
Steer for the right way, and keep to the track !  
Fling off Despair, — it has strength like a giant ; —  
Shoulder thy Purpose, and, boldly defiant,  
Save to the Right, stand unmoved and unpliant !  
Faith and God's promise the brave never lack.

Trust to the Future ; — the Present may fright thee,  
Scowling so fearfully close at thy side ;  
Face it unmoved, and no Present can blight thee, —  
He who stands boldly each blast shall abide.  
Never a storm but the tainted air needs it,  
Never a storm but the sunshine succeeds it ;  
Each has a lesson, and he alone reads it  
Rightly, who takes it and makes it his guide.

Trust to the Future ; — it stands like an angel,  
Waiting to lead thee, to bless and to cheer ;  
Singing of hope like some blessed Evangel,  
Luring thee on to a brighter career.  
Why should the Past or the Present oppress thee ?  
Stamp on their coils, — for, with arms to caress thee,  
See, the great Future stands yearning to bless thee ;  
Press boldly forward, nor yield to a fear !

Trust to the Future ; — it will not deceive thee,  
So thou but meet it with brave heart and strong ;  
Now begin living anew, and, believe me,  
Gladness and Triumph will follow ere long.  
Never a night but there cometh a morrow,  
Never a grief but the hopeful will borrow  
Something of gladness to lighten the sorrow ;  
Life unto such is a conqueror's song !

Trust to the Future, then ; — cease from your weeping ;  
Faith and a firm heart are all that you need ; —  
God and his angels have yet in their keeping  
Harvests of joy, if we sow but the seed !  
Trust to the Future, — all life will be glorious ;  
Trust, — for in trusting the soul is victorious ;  
Trust, — and in trusting be strong and laborious ;  
Up and be doing, and give God the meed !



## NEW JERSEY AND HER SCHOOLS.

We have lately had the pleasure of assisting at a Teachers' Institute in the State of New Jersey, and, while there, we learned many particulars in regard to the condition of public schools in that important State, which it may gratify our readers to know. By law, \$40,000 of the School Fund is annually divided among the counties by the Trustees of said Fund. The Board of Freeholders, in each county, distribute the Fund to the several towns. The inhabitants of each town elect a Town Superintendent, who has full power to district the town and to alter districts as circumstances may require. The inhabitants also choose three or more Trustees for each district, to determine the length of schools, and location of schoolhouses. The inhabitants are also required to raise by taxation a sum as large, at least, as their share of the State Fund, but not exceeding three dollars for each child. Each county, by its Board of chosen Freeholders, is required to choose two *Examiners*, who, in connection with the Town Superintendent shall examine all teachers, having power to revoke the license at pleasure. The District Trustees employ the teachers thus licensed in their county, and make out a list of children in their District between 5 and 18 years of age, for the Town Superintendent, who then apportions the money among the Districts in proportion to the *number*, and not the *attendance*, which would be far better. District Trustees, of the same or of adjoining towns, have power to unite two or more districts, to form one school, but all such union schools are under the supervision of the Town Superintendents. Sectarian schools already organized are allowed their share of the School Fund and the tax. This objectionable class of schools does not seem to be under the control of any town officer. The Town Superintendent is required to visit *every school* in the township, (the law does not say, *every public school*,) and to report particulars to the State Superintendent, who reports to the Legislature. The Town Superintendent is allowed one dollar a day, but the law does not say whether for every day or only when on duty, his chief duty being to visit every school once a quarter. The Town Superintendent, with the District Trustees, selects text-books. It does not appear that the District Trustees receive any pay, and yet for every neglect of duty they are subjected to a fine of ten dollars! Nor does it appear from the pamphlets of Laws before us how the State Superintendent, the Trustees of the School Fund, or the Town School Committee, are appointed. "These School Committees," we are incidentally told, "are required by law to perform the

duties enjoined upon Town Superintendents," but we can find nothing about these Town School Committees in the Laws! The District Committees correspond to our Prudential Committees.

The general impression left on our minds, after conversation with several of the best friends of general education in New Jersey, is, that there is great indifference to the cause of education throughout the State, and the schools are in a very low condition. We should not have drawn this conclusion from what we saw of the teachers assembled at the Teachers' Institute, at Somerville, a village of Bridgewater, in Somerset county; but, all agreed that Somerset county has taken the lead of other counties, and that Somerville is the brightest spot in the banner county. It seems that an Institute had been attempted twice before at Somerville, but without any striking results. The present movement originated with the teachers of Somerville and certain warm friends of the school system; and the Governor, State Superintendent, County Examiners, Town Superintendents, Clergymen, and other influential citizens, countenanced the movement by their presence. We never saw more enthusiasm at any Institute; and if the young teachers and visitors received as much pleasure as those did who had the honor to be instructors, we will venture to say there never was a more agreeable Institute; and we cannot but think the Legislature will immediately make provision for moving the State in a similar manner, by providing liberally for Institutes in every county.

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### RUSSIAN SCHOOLS.

We know so little of the state of education in Russia, that the following remarks from "Jerrmann's Pictures of Petersburg" are quite interesting. Two things, at least, strike us as improvements even upon New England Schools and Colleges; one, that they do not teach every thing in the same school, and oblige all pupils to go through the same routine;—the other, that the supervision is novel, and more thorough than that of our School Committees; our Boarding Schools, we believe, have no supervision. ED.

"Whilst speaking of buildings pertaining to the crown, Mr. Jerrmann gives an account of the various imperial establishments for educational purposes. These include military and civil

schools,—schools for Engineers, Miners, Lawyers, Agriculturists,—and are under the special protection, and indeed, under the personal superintendence of the Emperor, who takes the strongest interest in, and frequently visits them. His visits are seldom announced beforehand. Sometimes he rises in the middle of the night from the iron camp bed, upon which he invariably sleeps, gets into his one-horse *droschki*, and makes a solitary inspection of the different public schools. These investigations are conducted with true military rigor. ‘The Emperor’s first glance on entering the corridor, is at the thermometer; and wo betide them if it does not stand at the prescribed degree. Then he visits all the rooms, to see if there is everywhere light, and if the officers on duty are vigilant. The beds of the scholars are next examined; the Emperor pulls off the bed-clothes, and, holding a light in one hand, with the other he turns the children from side to side, strictly investigating the cleanliness of the linen, and of their persons.’ It seems almost inconceivable that idle and malevolent persons have taken the Emperor’s nocturnal expeditions as foundation for the wildest and most ridiculous tales, which are often the subject of jest and laughter in the family circle in the Russian court. In proof that these nonsensical fabrications have reached the ears of Nicholas himself, Mr. Jerrmann refers to his having one day said to Viscount de Custine, when showing him the pupils of the public schools, whose healthy appearance struck every one: ‘Here are some of the youths of whom I devour a few every week;’ and Count Orloff, who just then came up and was presented to Custine, announced himself as ‘the famous poisoner.’”

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[Written for this Journal.]

## POVERTY AND CRIME.

### A DIALOGUE.

*Dives.* — What say you? Have I not caught you in the act?

*Lazarus.* — You have, and I can but submit.

*D.* — You do confess the theft?

*L.* — I do. I will not hide the truth.

*D.* — If truth you speak, say why you stole at all.

*L.* — I needed food, and needed means to purchase it.

*D.* — The State will find you food and work besides, when you are sentenced and confined.

*L.* — 'T were better to have found me both before.

D. — Had you been disposed to work, you had not thus been driven to theft.

L. — You, who abundance have, know not the trials and temptations that beset the destitute, and sway their better will.

D. — You had no right to steal.

L. — I had a right to live. My children —

D. — You have children, then?

L. — Five, till two were taken.

D. — How taken?

L. — By disease, induced by destitution and exposure.

D. — And you did steal to save the rest?

L. — Even so. Would I had done it sooner for their sakes. I did not yield till every hope was lost, and then the sacrifice was vain.

D. — 'T was a hard case. How came you destitute to this degree?

L. — I worked too hard, fell sick, and found no friends. My wife then over-toiled, and has fallen a sacrifice for those she loved.

D. — How was your boyhood passed?

L. — In poverty. My parents died while yet I was a child, and I had none to guide me.

D. — Somebody was to blame. Did you not ask assistance?

L. — Often, and sometimes found it, but no one cared enough to take me by the hand and save me.

D. — Did you e'er tell your case to any one?

L. — Yes, often.

D. — To whom?

L. — To you. I well remember your reply, — "I've heard that tale before. You beggars are impostors all."

D. — I have been oft imposed upon. Does not the City or the State provide for such as you?

L. — Not till we break the law. It leaves us free till then.

D. — You knew the law?

L. — I did, but did not make it; never gave it my assent. Had poor men made the law, it had *prevented* crime, or been more mild and just in punishing.

D. — How *just*! It cannot sure be wrong to punish theft!

L. — The poor man's law had looked to motives, not to acts; it would have weighed temptations, circumstances, and, mayhap, have laid the penalty on those, who, having more than they could use, imparted not to those who sorely lacked.

D. — Then you think me more guilty than yourself. Is it not so? Speak out. Be plain.

L. — I say not so; but, if the blessed rule of doing as we would be done unto had been observed, I had not stolen; and if none but he who is without offence may cast the stone —

*D.* — You do not mean to impeach my character that is above reproach.

*L.* — The world has said that you are hard.

*D.* — Hard, but most just. I never took a farthing not my own.

*L.* — Your shrewdness all allow. Your bargains all are *good*, as those are called which often are unequal.

*L.* — Yes, they are always good. "I often shave the flats." [*Exultingly.*]

*L.* — And take what, had they equal knowledge, equal skill, they had not lost. In God's just balance, this may be called theft, theft without the excuse of want. I never thus have wronged the ignorant, and never stole when I had means to live.

*D.* — The world does not call shrewdness theft, and a sharp bargain is applauded oft.

*L.* — The wretched look on life with other eyes than the successful. I have sometimes thought when I have seen the judge condemn the criminal, whom ignorance and temptation caused to fall, that, had their circumstances been exchanged, their fate had been reversed.

*D.* — You would make all men thieves!

*L.* — O, no; I would make all men merciful.

*D.* — What would you have me do, were you now in my place?

*L.* — Do as you would be done unto. Forgive as you would hope to be forgiven.

*D.* — 'T will do no good thus to forgive, if the temptation or necessity to repeat the offence be not removed.

*L.* — 'T is true.—I must submit.

*D.* — Not so. The lecture you have read me shall not so be lost. I will forgive the offence, and freely will supply what thou dost need to save thy little ones from want, and to enable thee to begin a course of honest industry; — and God forgive my trespasses as I do yours.

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#### STATE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATIONS.

This Association held its annual meeting at Buffalo, Aug. 7, and we mention the fact because we believe it may furnish a lesson to those who have the management of similar Conventions in this State and elsewhere. Not many years ago, an attempt was made to get up a State Teachers' Convention in Massachusetts, although this State was the home of the American Institute of Instruction, and had Conventions and Associations in several



counties. It was said, that the American Institute was unprofitable, because under the control of Educationists rather than Practical Teachers, and it was high time for the actual teachers to assert their rights and take the lead. When the first meeting to form a State Association was called at Worcester, it may be recollected that certain teachers from New York appeared and ventured to condemn, in rather unbecoming terms, the leading educationists in Massachusetts, and we believe nobody doubted that they were invited hither for this purpose. The American Institute was spoken of as superannuated, the Board of Education as imbecile, and better things were promised with a liberal tongue. About the same time, a State Association was formed in New York, and managed much in the same way, mainly by private teachers. The Board of Education, or what is equivalent to it, were treated with contempt, and there as here an opposition Journal was got up to put down the District School Journal, which, like this Journal, had always been the advocate of the *Common Free Schools*.

One of the gentlemen who visited Worcester, as abovementioned, has been for some time the President of the New York State Association, and the Albany Journal, under the head of Editorial Correspondence, publishes an account of the meeting, and, after severely mentioning some report and debates of the first day, says, "Our own impressions, as a disinterested observer, were, that, had both the report and the debate been subtracted from the proceedings, the remainder would have been just equal to the subtrahend, so far as any *practical* results were concerned." The lectures of the second day were mentioned in milder terms. The first "was listened to with marked attention," the second was "long and prosy," the third "the most profitable of the session," the fourth was "lengthy and listened to by those who were near enough to hear the speaker." Then the writer goes on to say what led us to allude to the meeting, for we believe the remarks apply to too many such Conventions, and the sooner an entire reform is effected the better for the cause of the Teacher. It is useless to attempt to conceal the fact, that our teachers take but little interest in Conventions, and these meetings, as hitherto managed, have produced very little effect upon the teachers or upon the community.

"The only business of importance," says the writer, "transacted after this lecture, was the election of officers for the ensuing year. We regretted to see so much excitement among some members of the Association while this order of business was pending. It would almost seem, judging from appearances, that this was the great measure of the session, whereas it is really the

least important. What matters it who is President or Secretary, provided they be competent to make the Association a useful auxiliary in the great cause of Popular Education? It is unmanly and degrading to see teachers quibbling and quarreling about a few petty offices that confer no honor upon the holder except they be honorably and usefully filled. Upon the whole, we confess to great disappointment at the result of this meeting of a society that might and should be made a powerful means for the advancement of the cause of Popular Education, — for the elevation of the Teachers' profession. There has been too much of dull and prosy reporting and lecturing on old and hackneyed subjects, — too much of discursive and useless discussion, — too little efficiency and system in the despatch of business, — and withal, too much cliquing, and clanning, and pipe-laying, and belittling trickery, about nothing at all, but some officers! If teachers are to command the respect, the confidence and the gratitude of the community they serve, it must be by showing themselves worthy of such consideration; and they can show themselves worthy, not by stooping to the petty trickery of politicians, — not by merely resolving that they are not sufficiently regarded and amply compensated, — not by organizing themselves into a society for mere effect, — not by making pretty speeches that *sound* well, — not by public dinners and gorgeous displays, — these are but gilded trappings of demagoguery, — but by the *actual results of well-directed labors within* the school-room first, without it afterwards. 'By their fruits ye shall know them.' If teachers have not been sufficiently regarded heretofore, it is because they have not, as a class, deserved to be. If they are not now, it is for the same reason; and if they are not to be in the future, theirs will be the fault. We speak thus frankly of the teacher because we ourselves are teachers, and hence *may* speak freely. We speak thus freely of this Association because we are one of its members, and may so speak without incurring the charge of enmity. We believe the whole thing should be reorganized and remodelled, so as to secure more definite and practical results; and we are happy to know that we are not alone in this belief. A committee has been appointed to revise the Constitution, and we hope that instrument may be so revised, and that the whole machinery of the society may be so repaired, as to make it worthy of the teachers of New York, and an efficient auxiliary in the advancement of a cause which every true teacher and friend of humanity holds first in his affections."

Another correspondent of the same Journal proposes the holding of a National Convention at Washington for considering the

present condition of the profession, and determining upon some means to improve it; — delegates to be sent from each State, and the State to defray the expenses of its delegation.

What can this mean? Has the National Convention lately holden at Cleveland been guilty of some misdemeanor, or was it not sufficiently *practical* in its lectures and discussions? Has some publisher been disappointed? or are more offices wanted? We recommend self-culture to the profession, and particularly recommend the support of the Common School Journal of Massachusetts, which, if properly encouraged, would do more for the cause of the teachers than all the Conventions that can be crowded into vacations, which ought to be spent in better relaxation than is obtained in hearing dull lectures or shallow debates.

Since writing the above, we see by the newspapers that the Massachusetts State Teachers' Association has held its annual meeting at Fitchburg. The meeting was thin, and we can see nothing remarkable in the Report of its doings, except that the teacher of a private school was elected President instead of a public teacher, and twelve very good men were again selected to edit the Journal of the Association, which was "got up" to supersede this Journal, then edited by one who had offended some of the Massachusetts Teachers. We wish it had been otherwise ordered, and we should retire with pleasure did the other Journal occupy any portion of the ground that ours does; but, until it does this, we, single handed, must be content to struggle on beside the many-headed Journal, which we hope will be taken by all — who do not prefer our own. Truth, Reform and Improvement are our aim, and we shall fearlessly pursue our course, relying upon the discernment of teachers, and of the people, whose true interests we have at heart.

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NOTICE. The Editor has at last returned home, and will endeavor speedily to "bring up" the Journal, by publishing the last number of the year with a complete INDEX. The new year and new volume will commence January 1, 1852, and to mark more distinctly the *progressive* character of the Journal, it will be entitled, "THE COMMON SCHOOL JOURNAL AND EDUCATIONAL REFORMER," and it is hoped that Teachers will no longer forget that it is laboring for them, and cannot be expected to live without their aid.

LYCEUM LECTURES. The Editor has prepared several, which he should like to deliver, some of these Winter evenings. Terms, Ten Dollars. As he may not speak of their quality, he can only say, no satisfaction, no pay, beyond expenses.

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☞ All Communications, Exchanges, and Books for review, must be directed to Wm. B. Fowle, West Newton, Mass.